

**Session Name and Time:** Surveys on a Shoestring Afternoon

**Moderator:** Barry Nusbaum Office of Environmental Information, EPA Headquarters

**Presenter:** Colleen Blessing, Department of Energy

**Presentation Summary:** Doing surveys is important, but there are dos and don'ts to think about before you begin.

**Important Ideas from the Discussion:**

Shoestring = No money, no contractor, only volunteers

Colleen Blessing is an economist, not a statistician, and she learned surveying on the job.

- ⇒ People Make lots of mistakes in developing surveys so learn from others
- ⇒ Senior Management support is essential
- ⇒ Since her office designs and fields surveys they know how to do them inherently

How do you ask questions for your survey?

- ⇒ Telephone
- ⇒ Internet
- ⇒ Paper

Don't ask questions if you are not going to make changes based on the customers opinions.

Don't do a survey if there is not a customer for your results.

Keep management involved along the way

Advantage - If you do it yourself, you have the advantage of knowing first hand what

Closed ended questions are fine if all you want is yes or no answers

1-5 is good for measuring though it gives you a neutral position

Since federal government can't give gifts as incentives, include brochures of interest in your follow-up to let customers know you appreciate their taking the time to respond.

Contacting your customers:

Pre contact - let them know before hand you are planning to do the survey and when

If you send a hard copy survey, send a postage paid return envelope

Send a post card - reminder if you have not received the response - thank you if you have received the response.

Send a second survey in a different color.

Always remember to send the thank you and if you have a brochure of interest stick that in.

Qualitative feedback opportunities. Use focus groups with a moderator.

Do small sample surveys

**\*\*Always do a pretest using a few people you know to ensure the survey is valid.**

Suggestion: When you send the postage paid envelope try to use stamps specific to your audience. For instance, if you are trying to get an international response, order stamps from their country. It will cost slightly more, but it will put a personal touch that makes the people feel special.

**Questions:**